

Data Collection Considerations

This handout supplements other tip sheets for Evaluation Design and helps you plan and manage your data gathering and collection for Step 4 of the evaluation process.

Collecting Primary Data

Collecting primary data may address gaps in community-level measures that may not be available with existing data, but doing so can be costly.

If primary data collection is necessary, consider who you will be collecting data from and what information you really need to know from them. Consider various types of respondents (e.g., program implementers, program participants, or other key stakeholders) who can help you to answer your specific evaluation questions.

If you are designing your own data collection tools, having clarity around the following questions can influence the quality of your data:

- How will you design the instrument and word the questions?
- How will you collect data (i.e., data collection procedures)? Who will collect data and how you will train data collectors?
- How many and what types of participants or stakeholders will you be collecting data from?
- How much data do you need to ensure validity and reliability?
- How will the data be coded, cleaned, transformed, and managed?
- How will routine error checking, data quality control, or quality assurance be conducted?



Many organizations have standards for human subject protection. Make sure that you have a clear understanding of what your organization requires. Depending on what you are collecting and from whom, your organization may require approval for data collection from an Institutional Review Board (IRB). Your funding may also have requirements and regulations that your evaluation must meet. Ensure that you are clear about what is required before beginning data collection.

It is also important to ensure that issues of confidentiality and culturally appropriate methods and tools are addressed. This may include factors such as the population's language needs, literacy levels, and credible collectors.



Planning Your Data Collection

There are many different methods for gathering data. You should select the method that best suits your needs. For additional considerations about different data collection methods (e.g., interviews or survey), see <https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/eval/framework/step4>.

It may be helpful for you to first take stock of existing documents and records (i.e., secondary data) that the program has before collecting new data. Review the **Evaluation Data Sources** tip sheet for more information.

Data collection procedures should protect confidentiality and be conducted in a way that is consistent with your community's cultural norms and institutional requirements.



Use the following template to help you plan and manage gathering and collection of data for your evaluation. To fill out this PDF, you can type directly into the text fields using a PDF editor or print a copy to complete by hand.

Data Collection Plan

[illegible]

**Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention**
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control

EvaluACTION

